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HISTORICAL NOTES

ROUSSEAU'S UNCLE BERNARD

In Rousseau's *Confessions* (Oeuvres Postumes de J. J. Rousseau, Neuf chattel 1782, Tome Cinq Livre Quatre. page 170) the following passage occurs:

"Mon Oncle Bernard était depuis quelques années passé dans la Caroline pour y faire bâtire la ville, de Charles Town dont, il avait donné le plan; il y mourut un peu après; ("My Uncle Bernard had gone some years since to Carolina to build the City of Charles Town of which he had made the plan. He died there shortly afterwards").

Col. Gabriel Bernard was never employed to "build" the City, but he was employed as engineer in charge of building and repairing its "fortifications" in 1736, and he died here in 1737. The first mention of him is found in the Journal of the Provincial Council of Friday, January 16, 1735-6 (Office Historical Commission of So. Ca., Mss Journal, page 170), as follows:

"Read the Petition of Col. Gabriel Bernard praying he may be employed as Engineer in this Province having produced a Commission and Certificate to this Board of his having served as Engineer in Europe."

On the same day this petition was recommended to the "Commons House" and that house (House Journal, same office, page 354) on the same day debated the petition and "Letter of recommendation from the Honrble. Coll. Schutz to his late Excellency Gov'r Johnson" and ordered that Col. Samuel Prioleau and Alexander Hext and Capt. Othniel Beale be a committee of Fortifications and should join a committee of the Upper House and confer with them and Col. Bernard on the subject. The Committee of the Upper House were Joseph Wragg and Thomas Waring. The result of this conference was the following paragraph of the Act of Assembly of 1736.

"That Mr. Gabriel Bernard shall and he is hereby appointed Chief Engineer, who shall constantly attend direct and inspect the raising and repairing such fortifications as the same commissioners shall think fit and shall be allowed at and after the rate of

£700 per annum nevertheless subjected to be displaced and the said salary taken away by vote or order of the General Assembly.” (The value of a pound current money was about of a pound sterling.)

He was subsequently granted £100 current money with which to procure “such necessaries as he should have occasion for to undertake the fortifying the Town and Harbour of Charlestown” (House Journal, page 485) and £50 current money to defray his expenses in commanding the forces at Port Royal (Commons Journal, Feb. 9, 1736–7, page 506). He was buried in St. Philips Church yard 19 July, 1737.

The inventory of his estate will be found in the office of the Probate Judge for Charlestown County in Book 1736–1739, page 132 recorded 28th July, 1737. His original will and the copy of it on record were both lost in the removal of the records from Charleston during the Confederate War, but the usual notice to creditors to prove their debts against the estate was published by Samuel Prioleau, Executor, in the *South Carolina Gazette* of July 16, 23 and 30, 1737.